

Nevada County Transportation Commission

The Nevada County Transportation Commission (NCTC) is the Regional Transportation Planning Agency for Nevada County. NCTC coordinates state and federal transportation programs for Nevada County, the City of Grass Valley, Nevada City, and the Town of Truckee.

NCTC Commissioners

Kerry Arnett

Mayor, Nevada City

Drew Bedwell

Nevada County District III Supervisor

Ann Guerra

Member-at-Large

Chet Krage

Member-at-Large

Linda Stevens, Vice-Chairman

Grass Valley City Council

Josh Susman, Chairman

Vice-Mayor, Town of Truckee

Robin Sutherland

Nevada County District IV Supervisor

This Newsletter is Prepared by the Staff of the Nevada County Transportation Commission

Daniel B. Landon, Executive Director

Michael G. Woodman, Transportation Planner

Nancy D. Holman, Administrative Services Officer

Antoinette Perry, Administrative Assistant

The Nevada County Transportation Commission Newsletter is published bimonthly. If you would like to be added to the mailing list, please write or call the Nevada County Transportation Commission office.

101 Providence Mine Road, Suite 102
Nevada City, CA 95959

(530) 265-3202

Fax: (530) 265-3260

Web Page: <http://www.nctc.ca.gov>

E-mail: nctc@nccn.net

Nevada County Transportation Commission Newsletter

Issue 17

September 2003

“Creating a better future by building upon successes of the past”



Transit Service Changes In The Making

The Gold Country Stage has been providing service to Western Nevada County residents since the mid-1970's and currently serves over 300,000 passengers per year.

When the “Stage” service began, it served primarily Grass Valley, Nevada City, and the County area between the two cities. Today the Gold Country Stage transit service extends from the Grass Valley/ Nevada City area to North San Juan, Colfax, Penn Valley, Lake Wildwood, and Auburn. In Fiscal Year 1996/97 system-wide operating costs for Gold Country Stage were \$931,144, but by FY 2001/02 they had risen to \$1,817,698, showing a 95% cost increase. Revenues from the passenger fares during FY 2001/02 were \$233,505, resulting in a total subsidy of \$1,584,193.

The Nevada County Transportation Commission recently completed a *Western Nevada County Transit Development Plan (TDP)* for Fiscal Years 2003/04 through 2007/08. The purpose of this document is to provide recommendations every five years, aimed at making transit service as effective and productive as possible, while maintaining fiscal sustainability. The TDP predicted that without changes to the Gold Country Stage operations plan, expenditures in the 2003/04 FY will exceed available revenues by \$180,000. In FY 2004/05 – 2007/08 the deficits would exceed \$330,000 annually, resulting in a total deficit for the five-year period of more than \$1.6 million. This funding shortfall included both fixed route transit services and paratransit service provided by Gold Country Telecare. The Transit Service Governing Board, known as the Operational Policy Committee (OPC), recently directed Nevada County Transit Services staff to make changes to routes to improve productivity and reduce service to the less productive areas of the community, in order to avoid a shortfall in the operating budget. *Changes are detailed on page 2 of this newsletter.*



Gold Country Stage Trolley at Nevada City Highway Bus Stop Near Hughes Road

Forecasts in the TDP predict that Gold Country Stage will finish the five-year period with improved performance, productivity, and fiscal sustainability. Proposed modifications in the TDP will balance revenues and expenditures between FY 2003/04 and 2007/08, with an average annual budget of \$2.7 million and a total five-year expenditure of over \$13.9 million. The entire TDP may be viewed online at www.lscstahoe.com (click on “Current Projects” link).

What can Nevada County residents do to improve and help finance the Gold Country Stage and Telecare services?

1. Share your comments on how the service does or does not meet your needs (see page 2 for who to contact).
2. Use the transit services in your area. This will improve ridership and help insure that services will be continued.
3. **Shop locally!** One-quarter cent of all sales taxes collected in Nevada County provides the majority of funding for transit and paratransit services.

Changes to Gold Country Telecare service are being made as well. We will report on those changes in our next newsletter.

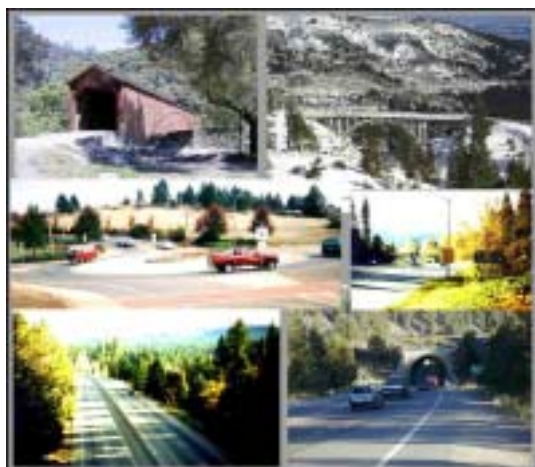
(continued on page 2)

Inside this Issue:

Page 2 – Transit Services Continued
Page 3 – Bridges of Nevada County

Nevada County Transportation Commission Newsletter

101 Providence Mine Road, Suite 102
Nevada City, CA 95959





Gold Country Stage Bus at East Main/Idaho-Maryland Intersection

A brief description follows of all the Gold Country Stage Routes as they reflect recent changes to service:

Route 1, the Main Street Express, provides service every 30 minutes between Grass Valley and Nevada City along the Main Street/ Nevada City Highway corridor, which includes stops at the Nevada County Government Center and HEW building. This route has the highest annual ridership of all Gold Country Stage routes at 93,353 in FY 2001/02, but on-time performance of this route is one of the worst in the system, with 28% of the trips being late. To give citizens better access to work, the start time for the route has been changed from 7:30 a.m. to 7:00 a.m. To help the route stay on time, it will no longer make deviations to serve the Sierra College and Litton Business Park areas. These areas will be served on Route 4.

Route 2, providing hourly service to the Ridge Road area, has added an additional trip in the afternoon and the ending time has been extended from 5:15 p.m. to 6:15 p.m. The routing of Route 2 in the Gold Flat Road area has been modified to improve service to the employment concentration on New Mohawk Road.

Route 3, the Grass Valley Loop, serves the southern portion of the Grass Valley community. Service is provided every 30 minutes to the Fairgrounds Senior Center and shopping areas, with four trips a day to Silver Springs High School. The Transit Development Plan (TDP) had recommended the bus stop in the K-Mart shopping center be relocated, however, based on citizen response and input, this bus stop has been retained.



Gold Country Stage Bus at the K-Mart Shopping Center

Route 4, which serves the Brunswick Basin area, will be rerouted to also include service to Sierra College Drive and Sierra Nevada Memorial Hospital on an hourly basis between 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.

Route 5 connects Western Nevada County with the Auburn area, and will have an additional roundtrip provided at 10:00 a.m. Currently it makes six trips per day from Grass Valley/Nevada City to Auburn, with connections to Sacramento and the San Francisco Bay Area. More than 25,000 riders per year use this service.

Route 6, service to Penn Valley, makes eight round trips daily from Lake Wildwood/Penn Valley to Grass Valley. The schedule was changed to start at 7:00 a.m. and end at 6:30 p.m., to better accommodate work schedules. Route 6 will no longer serve Loma Rica

Road area and the Nevada County Airport, nor the Cedar Ridge area on an on-call basis. The Loma Rica Road area will be served by a new Route 8 and Cedar Ridge will be served by Route 12.

Route 7 operated from Church and Neal Street in Grass Valley, along West Main, to Bitney Springs and the Yuba River Charter School facility. Even though it had high ridership, it has been recommended for elimination due to the fact that public transit vehicles are prohibited from competing with private sector school bus service and Route 7 was only serving the school-age population and was not being operated when school was not in session.

Route 8 was a mid-day shuttle that operated from 10:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. and provided connections in the Brunswick Basin and Sierra Nevada Memorial Hospital areas. Route 8 was originally conceived as a way of improving the on-time performance of Routes 1 and 4. By implementing changes in Routes 1 and 4, Route 8 was no longer needed and the primary destinations served by Route 8 will be more effectively served by the reconfigured Route 4. The discontinuance of this shuttle will save approximately \$63,500 annually. A new **Route 8** will make seven trips per day from Grass Valley to the businesses and employment centers along Loma Rica Drive near the Nevada County Airport.

Route 9 is a “route-deviation” evening service that operates between 6:00 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. throughout the Grass Valley/ Nevada City area. The productivity of this route ranked near the bottom with only 7.4 passengers per vehicle hour, as compared with 11.6 passengers per vehicle hour system wide. In response to strong public input against eliminating this route, the Operational Policy Committee (OPC) has decided to continue service while working with the Transit Services staff to find a means of improving this service for productivity.

Route 10 provides five trips per day, Monday through Friday, between the hours of 6:20 a.m. and 7:05 p.m. to the North San Juan area. Due to low productivity of 4.7 passengers per hour versus 11.6 passengers per hour system wide, Saturday service has been discontinued and the route no longer goes on an on-call basis into Yuba County to Camptonville.

New **Route 11** provides hourly service from Church and Neal Street in Grass Valley to the west side residential area of Grass Valley, between 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.

Route 12, as modified, now makes five trips per day Monday through Friday from Colfax to Grass Valley between 6:52 a.m. and 7:08 p.m. Saturday service to Colfax has been discontinued. Route 12 subsidy per trip was \$8.94 and served 6.3 passengers per hour versus system averages of \$4.60 per trip and 11.6 passengers per hour, with a farebox ratio of 8.6%.

The TDP also looked at current fare rates and a possible zone structure to charge higher fares for longer distances traveled. Based on recommendations in the report, one-day passes went from \$2.00 to \$3.00 and monthly passes have been raised from \$20.00 to \$30.00. For the longer distance Routes 5, 6, 10 and 12, one-way adult cash fares have been raised from \$1.00 to \$2.00, a one-day pass is \$5.00, and a monthly pass is \$60.00. [NCTC](#)

To comment on these service changes, contact the Transit Services office at 477-0103 or attend the next OPC meeting on October 15th immediately following the NCTC meeting (see below).

Upcoming NCTC Meetings

The next two meetings of the Nevada County Transportation Commission (NCTC) are scheduled as follows:

Wednesday, October 15, 2003 at 8:30 a.m., Nevada City Council Chambers, 317 Broad Street, Nevada City, CA

Wednesday, November 19, 2003 at 8:30 a.m., Nevada County Board Chambers, 950 Maidu Avenue, 1st floor, Nevada City, CA

Many of you have seen the movie, “*The Bridges of Madison County*,” and enjoyed the scenic bridges portrayed in several scenes. When the Nevada County Transportation Commission staff started looking around our County at the various bridges, we were equally impressed with what we have here and felt our bridges warrant similar attention. Therefore, we would like to share with you some of the famous, and maybe not so famous, “*Bridges of Nevada County*”. Our next few newsletters will showcase several bridges and details surrounding their construction and stated uniqueness. This edition we will feature our oldest and possibly most famous bridge.

But first – a little history on roads and bridges. The 1800’s were an era when many came to California to seek their fortune and start a new life in the frontier. Dirt trails evolved into wagon roads and eventually became narrow paved roads and then freeways, as the automobile became the popular mode of transportation. Paths of travel were often challenged by the need to cross over rivers and streams or even wider expanses such as gorges and canyons. When these obstacles could not be forded or easily detoured, it necessitated a new technology – bridge building.



Bridgeport Covered Bridge—Before the California Highway Commission was established in 1895 and bond issues were introduced in 1910, there was no state money available to build roadways and bridges. In 1853, the California Legislature authorized the formation of privately financed “Turnpike Companies” to build, maintain, and operate roads and bridges as business ventures, with their toll prices approved by the local County Boards of Supervisors. The Virginia Turnpike Company was started in 1856 under the direction of David I. Wood, who arranged construction of a toll road from Anthony House (present location under Lake Wildwood) to French Corral; a 10 mile trip.

Bridgeport was built along this toll-way in 1862 and spans the South Fork of the Yuba River. Mr. Wood directed its construction and used lumber from his sawmill in Forest City. A toll was charged to cover the cost of building the bridge and to make a profit. Passage over Bridgeport for a team of 8 horses, mules, or oxen was \$6.00. A man on foot was charged 25¢ to cross. The gross income in 1863 for the bridge was \$20,915.45. This toll-way later became a portion of the travel route between Marysville and Virginia City, connecting Nevada County mines with the Comstock Mines. Countless Wells Fargo stagecoaches crossed this bridge on their way to northern mines, and an old Wells Fargo building is still standing a short drive from the bridge in French Corral.

The unique design of Bridgeport appears to be taken from a patented plan of Theodore Burr for a bridge constructed in 1804 across the Hudson River. It features a Howe truss with an auxiliary Burr arch, which is visible from the outside and inside, consisting



A view inside Bridgeport Covered Bridge

of two 5 x 14 inch Douglas Fir timbers bolted together. The truss rests on massive granite blocks. The 27,000 shingle Sugar Pine shake roofing and sides protect the flooring and main supports from the weather. The bridge was able to handle 13 tons of weight when built in 1862. Today the bridge is rated at 3 tons, due to the age of the timber. Still not a bad load for a 141 year-old bridge!

Bridgeport was taken over by Nevada County in 1901 and no further tolls were charged. In 1986 the bridge was acquired by the State Department of Parks and Recreation and is now the feature of the South Yuba River State Park. On the weekends, during summer months, park rangers conduct gold panning demonstrations and allow visitors a chance to find their own chunks of gold. In the springtime the nearby trails are a gala array of wildflowers and ranger tours or private hikes delight the public. A visitor’s center near the bridge displays more history of the bridge and surrounding area, the families that worked and settled the area, and even some paw prints of local inhabitants to examine.

In March of 1996 Bridgeport was reshingled using Federal TEA (Transportation Enhancement Activities) money obtained through the help of the NCTC. On January 5, 1997 the bridge was heavily damaged and closed when El Nino rains and melting snow from the Sierra Nevada mountains raised the river level over 20 feet and torrents of water and debris ripped off shingles and



damaged the bridge structure. Repairs were funded by FEMA and the State Parks, and the bridge reopened in October 1997.

Bridgeport is one of only 10 covered bridges remaining in California and is heralded as the longest single span covered bridge in the United States (251 feet including wingwalls) and thought to be the longest arch/truss single span covered bridge in existence. The bridge is both a State and National Historic Landmark. [NCTC](#)
[Some information & photos were taken from [ncgold.com](#), [pashnit.com](#), [livinggoldpress.com](#), [ghosttownexplorers.org](#), and [dot.ca.gov/TEA.](#)]